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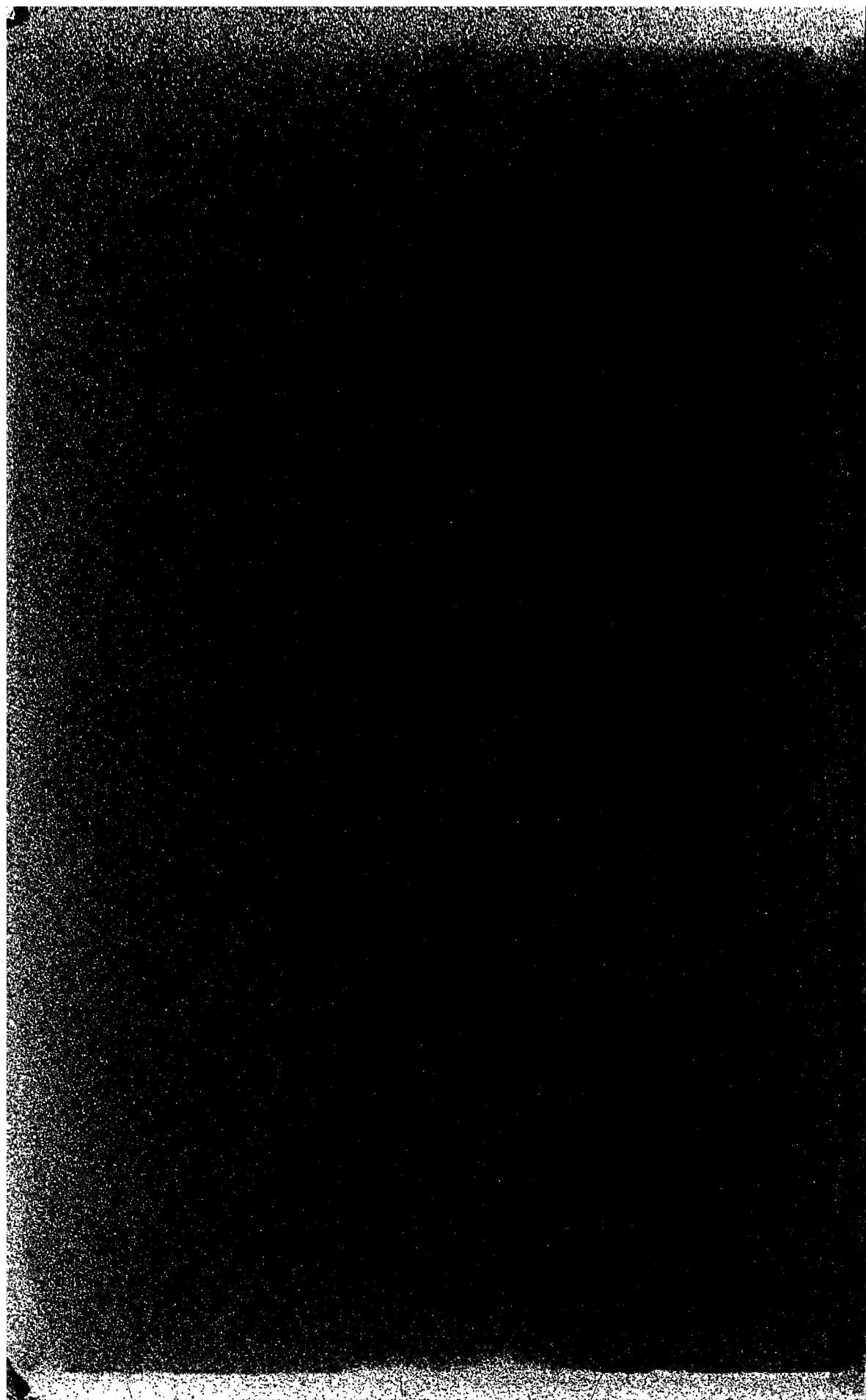
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ASHDOWN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

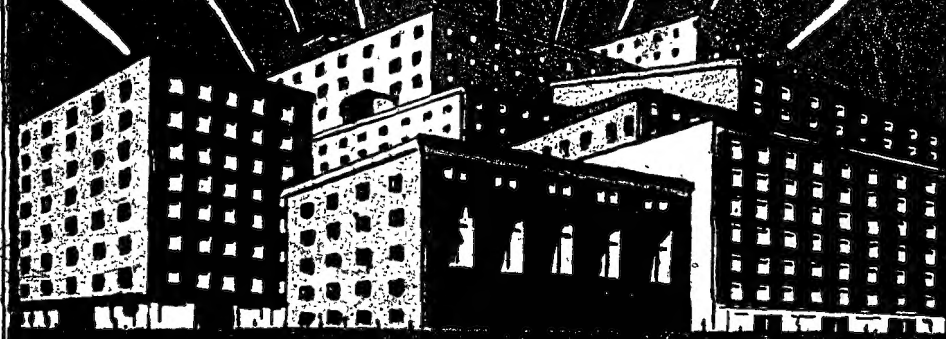
1869 1929

The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Co., Ltd.



1869 ♦ 1929

Ashdod's  
Diamond  
Jubilee





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JAMES HENRY ASHDOWN, FOUNDER  
1844 1924



HARRY C. ASHDOWN, PRESIDENT



# Diamond Jubilee

— OF THE —

*J. H. Ashdown Hardware Co., Limited*

WINNIPEG

CALGARY

SASKATOON

EDMONTON

REGINA

*Established 1869*



A short story of the founding of its business, a brief review of the building up of its enormous trade, an account of its different locations in Winnipeg, Calgary, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Regina, together with a brief biography of the late Mr. James Henry Ashdown from his early boyhood.



COMPILED AND PRINTED BY  
THE J. H. ASHDOWN HARDWARE COMPANY LIMITED  
CATALOG AND PRINTING DEPARTMENT

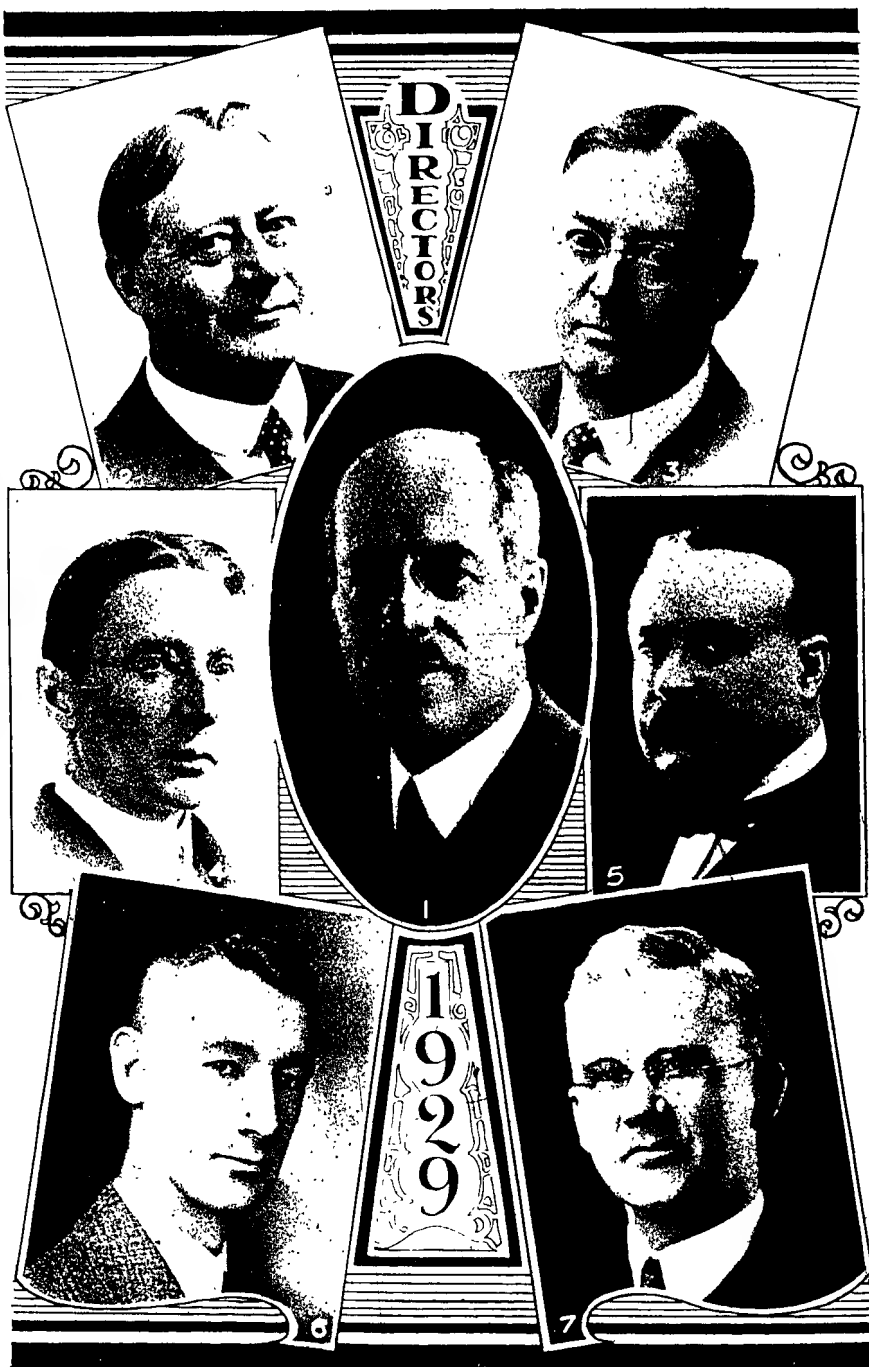
## DIAMOND JUBILEE



**T**HE development of the Canadian North-West has been one of the romances of history. Where a few decades ago the Indian ranged the forest, the buffalo roamed the mighty prairies and all else was silence, there now resounds the busy hum of industry. Cities, towns and villages have sprung up. Railroads gridiron the land. The rich soil has been levied upon to help feed the struggling peoples of older countries. Yet Western Canada is but in its infancy. It requires not the vision of a prophet to foresee its tremendous destiny. Many millions will live in happy prosperity within its borders. The surface has only been scratched.

The Diamond Jubilee of The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company Limited is a significant event in the history of Western Canada's development. Believing that a record should be made of it, the following pages have been written, not in a spirit of self-seeking but with an eye to the perpetuation of some of the records of a period of struggle and adversity, of success and prosperity. They are dedicated to those founders of our country whose efforts marched hand in hand with those of the late Mr. Ashdown in its up-building, to the friends and customers whose co-operation has made the success of this great enterprise possible, and to the unborn millions who will come after us.

In the rush of our daily life we frequently fail to look back to earlier days. We do not give full credit to those to whose courage and far-sighted vision we owe our present enviable position. All honor then, to our pioneers.



1—HARRY C. ASHDOWN, President  
 2—A. E. DYKES, Vice President  
 3—R. A. GRAHAM, Sec'y. Treas. & Gen. Mgr.  
 4—N. S. HUTCHISON  
 5—C. H. S. BAMFORD  
 6—W. E. DAVISON L.L.B.  
 7—W. J. ILLSEY

## Historical Sketch



IN the forties and fifties of the last century there was a heavy tide of emigration from the Old Land to Canada. James Henry Ashdown was a boy eight years of age in Old London when his father caught the Canadian fever. It was in 1852 that William Ashdown and his wife, Jane, brought their family on the long voyage to this country and settled in the village of Weston, near Toronto. Here William Ashdown taught school for several years, and at one period he, with his brother, operated two stores at Weston. The family prospered for a time but in the depression which swept the country at the close of the Crimean War all business fell off greatly. At the early age of eleven James had to leave school, for he was needed at home to serve behind the counter. This hardship, however, proved only a temporary interruption to his education which he continued at night school and during long evenings of independent reading. At the age of fourteen we find him giving his evenings to the perusal of Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England, rather an unusual type of work to attract a growing boy.

But Mr. Ashdown derived great benefit from his study of Blackstone for he thus laid the foundation of a remarkable knowledge of the basic principles of British law, the most valuable intellectual asset for a business man to possess. A well known Winnipeg Lawyer, who for many years did a great deal of work for Mr. Ashdown, once stated that few men of his acquaintance could equal him in getting at the weak spot in a legal document. Undoubtedly Mr. Ashdown's remarkable grasp of the principles and practice of law, so unusual in a layman, dated back to the long winter evenings spent by him in poring over works of this character.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

After a residence of several years duration in Weston, William Ashdown gave up his business and took a farm in the township of Brant. There the younger members of the family, James included, had to share in all the hardships and unremitting toil of pioneer life when the bush farms of Ontario had to be won from the wilderness.

When he was eighteen years old James H. Ashdown left home to carve out his own future. The only gift he received from the family was a small sum of money, the proceeds of the sale of a set of solid silver spoons which his mother had brought with her from England. The young man was endowed however, with good health and a sturdy frame and faced the future with the utmost confidence. He walked from the bush farm in Brant to Guelph. Failing to secure work there he proceeded to the village of Hespeler. His slender store of money exhausted, he saw a sixpenny bit sticking in the sand between two railway ties. He dug it out with his knife and reflected that it would provide him with one more meal.

The finding of the sixpence must have been a favorable omen, for it was in Hespeler that young Ashdown found employment and, more than that, a chance to learn a trade. John Zryd, the local tinsmith, accepted him as an apprentice under a three-year contract under which he received, in addition to board, lodging and laundry, twenty-five dollars the first year, thirty dollars the second, and forty-five the last year of his apprenticeship. Always eager to work and glad to earn a few dollars on the side, the apprentice posted up the books for the Hespeler blacksmith. For this night work, he was paid six dollars per year for a period of two years, and eight the third year.

### *Seeking a Fortune in the Western States*



As soon as the young tinsmith had learned his trade he decided to seek his fortune in the Western States, for the general idea had spread in Canada that a great boom would follow the close of the War of Secession. But this prosperity was not so pronounced as anticipated, and, after spending some time in Chicago and

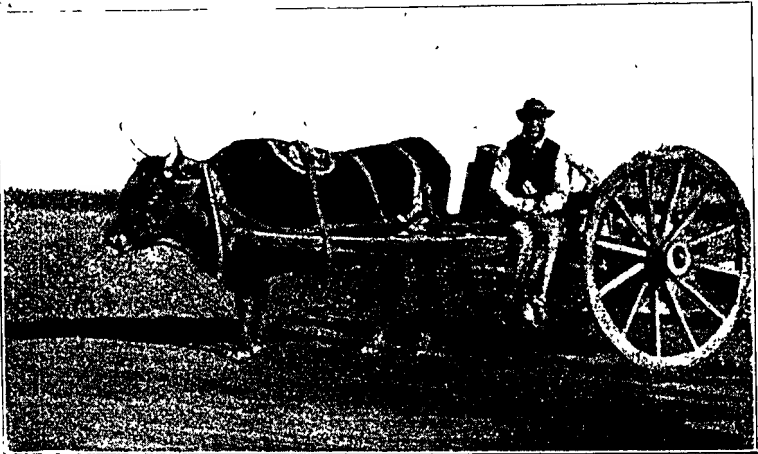
St. Louis, he finally found his way to the limits of civilization, at what was to be known as Fort Zarah, on the plains of Kansas. A block house was being erected to protect settlers from the Indians, and the young mechanic from Ontario secured work on this building for some ten months. There he saw the herds of buffalo which were still numerous in the West; the Indian tribesmen when they came to barter at the trading post; above all he saw and learned to love the boundless prairie country.

It was the memory of that free life in the Western country that made young Ashdown dissatisfied when he returned to Ontario. It was a letter that he chanced to read in the columns of the Toronto "Globe" that emphasized his discontent with the tamer life of the East. A settler of Portage la Prairie had written to "The Globe" to express his delight with life in Western Canada and to expatiate on the wonderful possibilities of the new country. It was probably one of the first specimens of "booster" literature that had been published by the Eastern press, and, strange to tell, it was the deciding influence that gave James H. Ashdown to Winnipeg and the prairie provinces of Canada.

But in 1868 Winnipeg was not on the map, nor was there a province known as Manitoba. There was a straggling Red River Settlement and two stone forts on the river bank (one, Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, and the other, known as Lower Fort Garry, some twenty miles down the Red) that were trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mr. Ashdown knew nothing of the commercial possibilities of the settlement, and from what he had seen of the frontier life in Kansas, he knew that he would have to put up with many hardships, would, in fact, have a difficult time getting to the vicinity of Fort Garry; but the West had called him, and once more he set his face towards the land of the boundless prairie and the buffalo.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

In those days the only entrance to Western Canada was by way of St. Paul and St. Cloud, Minnesota. There was a new line of railway northward from St. Paul to St. Cloud, but in June, 1868, when Mr. Ashdown arrived at St. Cloud, he had to make a bargain with the driver of a Red River ox-cart for the carriage of his luggage and provisions. He, himself, had to walk beside the train of ox-carts, stopping when they



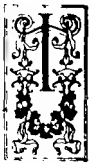
Red River Ox Cart from Actual Photograph

stopped and starting when they started. At meal time he had to prepare his own food, boiling tea, frying bacon, etc., and was incessantly assailed by clouds of mosquitoes. At night he slept beneath the carts or elsewhere as circumstances allowed. At last, after what was considered a very favorable journey of nineteen days, on the 30th of June, 1868, he reached Fort Garry.



Red River Settlement 1868 which grew into the City of Winnipeg

### *Grasshopper Plague*



IT is almost impossible for the present-day dweller in Winnipeg to imagine the primitive scene which greeted Mr. Ashdown when he was ferried across the Assiniboine and passed the fort to the scattered little village which at that time had not even the dignity of a name. Its log buildings, housing a population of nearly a hundred souls, sprawled over the prairie. There were Scotch and French settlers further down the river, but the village which was to grow into Winnipeg was a desolate-looking place. Moreover the young man from Eastern Canada had arrived at a very inauspicious time in the history of the Red River Country. The settlement was experiencing its second visitation of the grasshopper plague. The grasshoppers had been numerous the year before, but as they came in the autumn the crops escaped. They left myriads of eggs behind them, however, which were now hatching out in millions. Every green thing in the settlement was soon devoured by these locusts. They came in such numbers that they were piled up against the south walls of the fort in deep drifts. For fear their decaying bodies would poison the atmosphere, employees of the Hudson's Bay Company shovelled them into Company carts and wheelbarrows and

dumped them into the Assiniboine River. Whole fields were swept clean by these insatiable insects, so that great scarcity of food seemed inevitable. During that summer flour was selling for twenty-five to thirty shillings per hundred pounds, and oats for horse feed were two dollars a bushel. The buffalo hunt that season was also a dismal failure. As a result of this hard luck an appeal was made to the public of the United States and Eastern Canada, and also to the Dominion Government, for aid. By the autumn of 1868 it was found that 423 families, numbering 2,342 persons, in Western Canada, had to be supplied with provisions during the winter and until the next harvest. Later on the number of persons requiring aid to prevent them from starving amounted to three thousand, and the freighting of the supplies which had to be brought in from St. Cloud during the fall and early winter was a tedious and expensive task.

There was no reserve of food in the district owing to the fact that the settlers had little or no incentive to raise large crops. The Hudson's Bay Company was the only purchaser of agricultural products, and it frequently restricted its purchases to ten bushels of wheat and half an ox from each settler annually. It was not the policy of the company to encourage agriculture. Its chief interest was in furs and the wilder and more unsettled the country the better for the fur trader. Living under such conditions, therefore, the settlers depended upon freighting, hunting, fishing and the cultivation of the small amount of grain and garden stuff necessary for their own use. When the grasshopper plague came, all they could do was to appeal to the outside world for assistance to save them from famine.

### *Excuse if not the Cause of the Riel Rebellion*



It is one of the ironies of history that the effort of the Dominion Government to help the settlers of the Red River country in their necessity was at least the excuse if not the cause of the Riel Rebellion of 1869 and 1870. The Ottawa authorities considered that it would be better to provide the starving settlers with work at

good wages than to feed them gratuitously. Accordingly work was provided on the Dawson road under the direction of John Snow, and a survey of the district was instituted by Colonel J. Stoughton-Dennis. Soon Snow was employing many men in opening a road to the Red River Settlement from the north-west angle of the Lake of the Woods, and Dennis, accompanied by a large party, was busy surveying the whole district on a rectangular plan. Now in the early days French, half-breed and British settlers had squatted along the river banks. Their little farms had a narrow frontage but extended back from the river for two miles. According to an old custom they also enjoyed hay rights on the wild land for two miles behind their own property. When the Dominion surveyor, therefore, came along and cut across their narrow, ribbon-like farms with his rectangular scheme there was much uneasiness, not to say hostility. The English-speaking settlers were the first to take offence, and their suspicion of the Government was passed on to the French and half-breeds. When the latter commenced taking violent measures, the Scotch and English settlers withdrew from the agitation. But the fat was by this time in the fire, and the Red River Rebellion was the result. And the whole trouble, according to Mr. Ashdown, arose out of the misunderstanding of the good intentions of the Dominion Government.

## *Mr. Ashdown Serving in the Capacity of Painter*



IN spite of the grasshopper visitation with its train of misery and rebellion, in spite of the fact that in the fall of the year pemmican was selling at sixty cents a pound and flour at eighty cents, young Ashdown decided to stick it out. His people in the East wrote urging him to return home, but he was not the kind that turns back having once set his hand to the plough. He had already gained self-reliance and resolution in the school of hardship, and he had faith in the ultimate future of the new country. For the first summer and the following winter and summer he undertook any honest work that presented itself.

For instance some of his jobs were the painting of Deer Lodge, Knox Church and Holy Trinity. All the first winter he turned his earlier experience in Brant township to account in a lumber camp on the Assiniboine.

## *Starting in the Hardware Business*

**T**HERE were few business opportunities in the Red River Settlement and Mr. Ashdown had to wait until well on in the second summer before he was able to set up for himself. George Moser, the local tinsmith, was a German. He talked freely on political subjects and discussed the grievances of the settlers with strong anti-British sentiment. Becoming alarmed at the course affairs were taking in the settlement, he concluded that it would be better for him to leave for the United States before the storm broke. He was glad, therefore, when Mr. Ashdown proposed to buy the business, which was located in a shop at the rear of a store at the corner of Main and Portage, where the Canadian Pacific Railway ticket office now stands. The purchase price of the stock of George Moser amounted to the sum of £243; 6s. Although the prospective hardware merchant did not have sufficient resources to pay cash down, he was helped out by a loan from Colonel Dennis, and Moser was so anxious to sell that he accepted Mr. Ashdown's notes for the balance.

Just here it may be said that some months later, Moser rued his bargain and told some of his acquaintances that he hoped Ashdown would not be able to meet his notes when they came due. Once more the young Canadian who had bought out the German was cheered by the loyalty of a friend, a Mr. McBride, who went to him and told him he had heard that Moser wanted to get hold of the business again, but he would stand by Ashdown and would be glad to give him financial assistance if he needed any when the notes matured. While this kind offer was appreciated, there were sufficient funds on hand for the lifting of the notes at maturity without any assistance.

The young tinsmith and hardware merchant deserved to succeed. Most men would have hesitated to invest their

# DIAMOND JUBILEE

*Monrovia 16th Sept. 1869*

*Enclose Months after date I promise  
to pay to the order of George Moser  
the sum of Fifty Pounds Sterling  
for value received.*

*£ 50.0.0 Stg ... to the order of*

Copy of Note given to Mr George Moser for the purchase of his Hardware Stock  
with which Mr Ashdown started business

capital in a place which was likely soon to become the centre  
of serious disturbance, for during the summer a young  
French half-breed, Louis Riel, had been inflaming his

400 ST. PAUL STREET,

*Montreal 11 Sept. 1869*

*W. George Moser*

**McARTHUR & MARTIN,**  
GENERAL COMMISSION MERCHANTS.

<i>to Dr. of Generalized Account</i>	<i>1000 00</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>13 80</i>
<i>Enclosed &amp; kept alone</i>	<i>1000 00</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>14 05</i>
			<i>13 05</i>

*Monrovia 16th Sept. 1869*  
*W. Ashdown*  
*W. H. McArthur & Martin*

Copy of Invoice for first Bill of Goods received by Mr Ashdown  
after buying out George Moser

compatriots almost to the point of armed revolt. It was characteristic of Mr. Ashdown's optimism and indomitable spirit, however, that he embarked every cent of his earnings, pledged his credit, and commenced his business career in the face of such difficulties.


### *Changed Location*

THE young merchant soon removed from the undesirable premises which had satisfied Moser. He rented a shop on Lombard Street but had hardly become established there before the rebellion came to a head. Had Hon. Joseph Howe, who visited Fort Garry in the early days of October, 1869, taken the advice of Mr. Ashdown, it is probable that the threatened rebellion would have been averted. Mr. Ashdown earnestly advised the famous Nova Scotian to call a public meeting and, by making a clear statement of the Government's intentions, disarm suspicion and meet all the objections of malcontents in open discussion. But for some reason or other, which Mr. Ashdown said he could never fathom, Mr. Howe refused to adopt this sensible plan. After a very short stay he started on his return trip. Somewhere south of the American boundary he met the Hon. William MacDougall who was on his way to Fort Garry as Lieutenant-Governor elect to take over the "Hudson Bay Territory," including Assiniboia, which was governed by an elective council, presided over by the Governor of the Hudson Bay Territory, and to replace it with a popularly constituted provincial regime. Instead of stopping to hold a conference with MacDougall, Howe passed him with the curt greeting, "It's a cold day!"

MacDougall and his party of officials deemed it imprudent to press on to Fort Garry, for they had already received word that the French would oppose them by force. The new governor remained at Pembina, and appointed Colonel Dennis as his military representative to organize the loyalists against the rebels. It is significant that the overt act in the Riel Rebellion occurred on October 21, 1869, a few

days after Mr. Howe's mysterious visit had terminated. A detachment of Riel's men erected a large cross at a narrow pass near Stinking River, barricaded the highway, and proceeded to hold up all travellers and all trains of freighting carts, allowing none to pass on their way to the settlement without permits from Riel's officers. Among other things that the rebels confiscated were arms and ammunition being sent into the country for the use of the new Lieutenant-Governor and his party. On November 3, Riel took a still bolder step by seizing Upper Fort Garry. This he accomplished without any resistance, marching through the gate of the fort at the head of 125 armed half-breeds, who forthwith took possession.

### *Guarding Provisions*

HESE events created great indignation among the English-speaking people in the little village near the Upper Fort. The men of the place, Mr. Ashdown among them, talked matters over and Dr. Schultz and others advocated resistance. He urged the others to help him protect the Government pork and provisions stored in his warehouse. As the English settlers were without arms or in fact provisions, Mr. Ashdown said it would be folly to resist Riel in this way. "Let the Government guard its own provisions!" was his advice, and he went back to his store. Schultz's counsels prevailed, however, and he and his followers, some fifty volunteers, mounted guard over the Government stores. Mr. Ashdown related that he went to bed that night, but not to sleep. Although the Schultz move was contrary to his better judgment, he did not feel that he could stand aloof, so after an anxious night, he walked over to Schultz's store and lined up with the little band of unarmed citizen guards.

Mr. Ashdown's life-long ability to size up a situation and make a wise decision was never better illustrated than in this early and most dramatic incident. If his friends had taken his advice he and they would have been saved a miserable

experience. Three days after the English patriots went on guard, they were marched as prisoners through the gate of Fort Garry. As Schultz's store was under the guns of the Fort and as the English volunteers were quickly cut off by the half-breeds from all supplies of food and water, they were obliged to negotiate terms of surrender. When they marched out of the store they supposed by the message received from Riel through a negotiator that they would be given their liberty and allowed to go where they pleased, but they soon found that Riel's promise was worthless and that they were in his power.

### *Taken Prisoner*



HE prisoners were locked up in the upper flat of a two-storey building, ordinarily occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company's staff of accountants and clerks. The five or six rooms in this upper story were crowded. The ventilation was so bad the prisoners were compelled to break several of the windows to save themselves from being suffocated. They were imprisoned on December 7 and were doomed to stay in durance vile for sixty-nine days. Mr. Ashdown was confined with twenty-one others in a room twelve feet broad by sixteen feet long. And the French half-breeds were no tender jailers. The bill of fare consisted of pemmican and tea. Had it not been for the kindness of women in the village and the good offices of Mr. Joseph Crowson, who on account of lameness was suffered to go at large by Riel, and who carried provisions to the fort, the prisoners would almost have starved. As it was, many of the good things intended for them were snatched out of Crowson's baskets by the half-breed bandits. Mr. Crowson's daughter subsequently became Mr. Ashdown's wife.

Mr. Ashdown had very vivid memories of that weary imprisonment and many are the interesting stories that he had to tell concerning the attempts of his companions to escape and the general conduct of the guards. He formed

a very unfavorable impression of Louis Riel. He said that Riel fancied himself a little Napoleon, and carried himself like a strutting peacock. Nor was he really brave. When he heard that a party of English settlers were coming down from the Portage plains to attack him and his force and liberate the prisoners, he came and stood outside the door of the room where Mr. Ashdown was confined and in a shaky voice said, "Bad men are coming. You must be quiet. You must not make any disturbance." Mr. Ashdown admitted, however, that Riel had a wonderful influence over the French half-breeds and if he had not made the mistake of putting Thomas Scott to death it is probable that he would have been pardoned by the Government for his share in the rebellion and would have been an important figure in the Western country.

The execution of Thomas Scott occurred some little time after Mr. Ashdown had secured his freedom. He had heard rumours to the effect that Riel and O'Donohue, the two leaders, had determined to execute the young Irishman, but he never thought that they would go so far. In fact the very morning when Scott was being led out to his death Mr. Ashdown was working at his bench and never heard the news until after the murder had taken place. In Mr. Ashdown's opinion the execution of Scott was "worse than a crime; it was a blunder."

Speaking of Riel's reason for singling out Scott for the supreme penalty, Mr. Ashdown expressed the opinion that it was not because the genial young Irishman had been obstreperous or objectionable during his imprisonment, but because he was a fine figure of a man. The Indian always picks out a big man as the natural leader of any group, hence the half-breed Riel obeyed the redskin instinct in selecting Scott as his victim. Scott was well liked by Mr. Ashdown and the other prisoners. He was a good-hearted fellow and there was nothing evil in his nature.

Owing to the difficulty of the route from Port Arthur to the Red River it was not until August 24, 1870, that Colonel Wolseley's Expedition, a force of 1,200 men, arrived at Fort Garry and put an end to the reign of terrorism that had lasted

for nine months. Riel and his followers fled without firing a shot and law and order were established once more. Mr. Ashdown's first year of business had been discouraging but the coming of so many soldiers to the settlement and the arrangements that had to be made for housing them gave the young hardware merchant a remarkable revival of trade. In spite of the Riel regime he had been able to import in the preceeding June an order of goods from wholesale houses in St. Paul. The well-known Sheriff Inkster was in the ox-train freighting business at that time, and it was through his agency that an order of two and a half tons of hardware was brought from the railway terminus at St. Cloud to Fort Garry.

### *How Business was Conducted in 1870*



Showing how business was then conducted, and as a matter of very important interest in the history of the Ashdown firm, the following document bearing the date, June 1, 1870, is herewith transcribed:—

“Mr. Jas. H. Ashdown in acct. with C. Inkster.

June 1st, 1870	By cash £50.00 (In a Bill		
	of Exchange)	\$5.42	\$271.00
	\$20.00 at 13 per		
	cent prem.		22.60
	14.00 currency		14.00
			<hr/>
			\$307.60
	To cash to Bridert		
	& Keifer	\$271.00	
	“ J. Inkster	21.76	
	“ Frt. to		
	St. Cloud	14.45	
			<hr/>
		\$307.21	

Amount due J. H. Ashdown   \$0.39”

In the above it is interesting to note the premium that English money commanded in the United States in those days.

The arrival of Adams G. Archibald, who had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor in succession to the Hon. William MacDougall, who had long since returned to Eastern

# DIAMOND JUBILEE

Canada in disgust, gave a new tone to public affairs. The first Governor of the new province of Manitoba arrived on September 2, 1870, only a few days after the joyous entry of the Wolseley Expedition, and on November 20, an event that was almost as cheering as the setting up of the new Government was the completion of the telegraph line to Fort Garry, forming a fresh and important link between the Eastern provinces and the North-West and being a happy augury for the future. Encouraged by the increasing volume of business, it was in this same eventful month that Mr. Ashdown decided it would not be long until he would need much larger premises. So on November 4, 1870, he purchased the lot on which the Main Street retail establishment of The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company now stands, for the sum of forty pounds sterling.

*Winnipeg Manitoba  
4th November 1870*

*For and in consideration of  
the sum of Forty pounds sterling,  
paid to me — I Maurice John  
Goodwin Bowman, do hereby transfer  
all my right title and interest in  
that lot of land in the town of Winnipeg  
fronting on the main street, and  
being the one adjoining on the south  
side, the lot on which the Police  
Station is now situated, — to  
James Henry Ashdown, and do  
hereby promise to execute any  
deed or other papers which may  
be required for the legal and  
proper transfer of the same —*

*Witness*

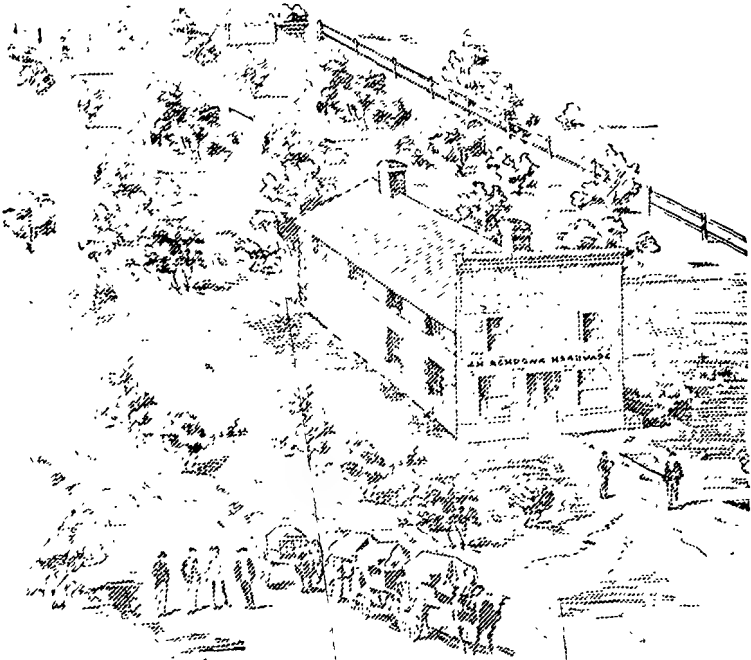
*Andrew Shantz*  
*Charles J. Bird*

*Maurice John Goodwin Bowman*

Copy of Note given by Mr. Ashdown for purchase  
of property where Main Street Store now stands

Note the peculiar legal description. The only identification is that it adjoins "the lot on which the Police Station is now situated."

It goes without saying that this method of description was soon changed to something more permanent.



The above illustration shows Mr. Ashdown's first building on the lot where the Main Street Store now stands, also shows shrubbery imported and planted by himself. This building was erected in 1871

### *First Building on the Present Site 1871*

**T**HE following year was an important one in the history of this enterprising merchant, for his business had already yielded him such good returns that he was able to pay for the erection of a wooden building, twenty by sixty, two storeys high, on the lot which he had bought the previous year. Mr. Ashdown did some of the work on this building himself and a most interesting

# DIAMOND JUBILEE

memory that he had in connection with his first permanent place of business was that the lumber was brought down the Red River on the steamboat "Selkirk" by no less a person than J. J. Hill, who was afterwards to achieve fame as the railroad king of the North-Western States. This was the first trip of the steamboat down the Red River. Perhaps this helps to account for the high price of the lumber. At any rate Mr. Ashdown had to pay seventy dollars per thousand for the siding used in the building and one hundred dollars per thousand for the flooring. However, he was glad to get it at any price, for business was increasingly good and he had to have a larger store.

L. S. G.  
2. 13.6

Winnipeg May 18<sup>th</sup> 1871  
Rec<sup>d</sup> of J. H. Ashdown the  
sum of two pound thirteen  
shillings & six pence being the  
amount in full of wages as  
Trusmith

W. J. White

May 27<sup>th</sup> - 1871  
Rec<sup>d</sup> of J. H. Ashdown  
the sum of \$5.00 Canada cur  
on A/c William Small

Copy of two receipts for payment of wages paid by Mr. Ashdown to men who worked for him in the year 1871.


*Navigation on the Red River*

WORD might be said in passing regarding the steam-boat business which flourished on the Red River from 1870 until the coming of the Canadian Pacific Railway to Winnipeg in 1884. When Hill & Co. put the "Selkirk" into commission they found they had a rival, "The International," a boat built by the Hudson's Bay Company. We are familiar with steamship mergers nowadays, and are apt to consider them a modern invention, but Mr. Hill formed one on the Red River as far back as 1871 when he added "The International" to his freighter, "The Selkirk." The company took on a new name, "The Red River Transportation Company," and, as is usual when mergers are formed, up went the freight rates. In fact the new company became so unreasonable and dictatorial that they refused to carry goods for certain people. This was an intolerable condition of affairs and James H. Ashdown was not the man to keep quiet when there was any abuse to be combatted. He and other merchants of the settlement decided to form an independent steamship company. They organized "The Merchants' Line," and procured the building of two river steamers to which they gave the names, "The Manitoban" and the Minnesota." For two years or so these boats churned the turbid waters of the Red River and no invidious distinctions were made either in carrying freight or passengers. But the officers of the Hill boats looked upon the Merchants' craft with jaundiced eyes, and one fine evening, in rounding a bend on the river, "The International" ran into "The Manitoban," and struck her a deadly blow amidships, a blow delivered accidentally on purpose. As bad management and financial difficulties had attended the Merchants' Line during most of its brief history, this predestined collision gave it the coup de grace and wound up its righteous but brief career.

In the summer of 1868, when Mr. Ashdown arrived in the Red River Settlement, there were only one hundred inhabitants in the muddy little hamlet which was afterwards to grow into the City of Winnipeg. To show how quickly the:

place began to grow after the Rebellion was over, it is only necessary to state that a careful census taken in October, 1872, showed the total population to be 1,467. Settlers were flocking into the country and the business of the little town was improving every month. But there was no municipal law; no provision for the survey of the streets or improvements of roads; no adequate fire protection; no water system, the water supply being in the hands of men who hauled it up from the Red River in barrels set on ox-carts; and worst of all no proper school facilities. Moreover, the town was split into four centres, each of which was jealous of the others. There were the following contestants for the centre around which the coming city should revolve—(1) Fort Garry, which had wealth and antiquity in its favor, the centre of the powerful Hudson's Bay Company influence; (2) the straggling village in which Mr. Ashdown had built his store and which was now enjoying a building boom; (3) Point Douglas, favored by a group of active speculators and land agents and (4) St. John's, the old ecclesiastical centre, dear to many because of sentimental ties.

### *How Winnipeg got its Name 1873*

HE burning question now before the citizens in the whole settlement was what to call the municipality which should include all these rival centres. In his paper, "The Nor'-Wester," Dr. Schultz suggested that it be called Winnipeg, after Lake Winnipeg. Others were for calling it Selkirk. Others suggested the old name Garry, by which it was already known in the East. The name Assiniboine was also warmly supported. The majority of the citizens, however, were for Winnipeg, and they were determined that not only should the future city at the forks of the Red and the Assiniboine be called Winnipeg but that it should be incorporated forthwith as a city. Mr. Ashdown was for the name Winnipeg and was equally pronounced in favor of going to the Legislature and asking for incorporation as a city. But it took more than a year of agitation and effort to secure this happy result. While Dr. Schultz, who after-

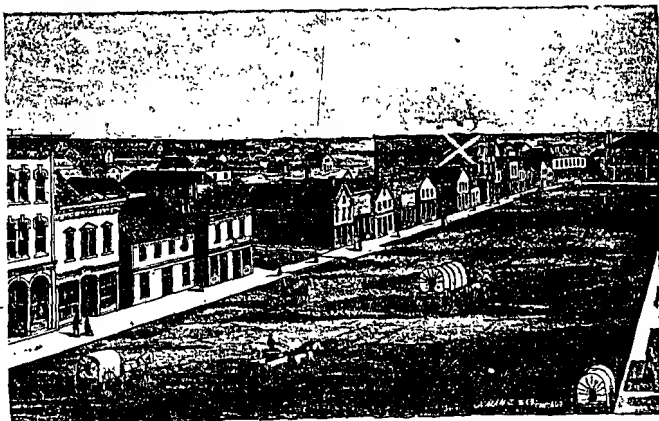
wards became Lieutenant-Governor of the province, was lucky enough to coin the name, Mr. Ashdown might well claim to be, the father of the city. For to him more than to any one man was due the successful carrying of the bill for incorporation over the heads of the recalcitrant Legislature of the time.

Winnipeg has seen a good many municipal rows in its day, but none stormier than the struggle which attended its birth. On New Year's Day, 1872, Alexander Begg published the first number of "The Trade Review," a paper started for the express purpose of presenting and supporting the name "Winnipeg" against all rivals. During the whole year mass meetings were frequently held to discuss the question of incorporation and Mr. Ashdown was a leading speaker at these lively gatherings. When the Legislature met in February, 1873, short shrift was made with the bill for incorporation of "Winnipeg." Attempts were made by members to substitute one or other of the various names favored by rival interests. Provisions essential for the financial administration of the proposed municipality were also changed and the bill generally mutilated. Feeling ran so high that the friends of the bill mobbed the speaker of the house, who had made an adverse ruling on the bill, and tarred and feathered him. This act of violence killed all chances of passing the bill that session, and the house prorogued without anything definite being accomplished.

### *The Birth of a City*

WHEN the Legislature again assembled in the following autumn, the "Winnipeg" party collected its forces together, once more resolved to push the question to the limit. It is significant of the confidence that his fellow-citizens had already come to repose in Mr. Ashdown that they selected him as chairman of the committee to fight out the question with the law-makers. They knew that they could depend upon him as a moderate but determined and resourceful spokesman. Mr. Ashdown relates that one of the strongest forces in opposition to the bill was the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company. When the chairman of the citizens' committee got down to actual work at the

Legislature, the Hudson's Bay Manager argued the question stubbornly. First he wanted the committee to consent to have the municipality incorporated as a village. When he saw that they were obdurate, he said he would consent to having Winnipeg named in the bill as a town. But Mr. Ashdown would not give way an inch. He had big ideas about Winnipeg. "It is going to be a city, a metropolis, and we might as well start out right in the first place, and have it incorporated as a city!" No opposition could break down the resolution of Mr. Ashdown and his committee, and as their powers of persuasion were effective, and strong public feeling supported them, the bill was passed and the Royal assent given. On November 3, 1873, the busy little village on the banks of the Red River with a population of only 1,664, became at a bound the City of Winnipeg.



Winnipeg 1875. Looking North from Portage Avenue  
X This sign denotes Ashdown's Main Street Store


### *First Representative*



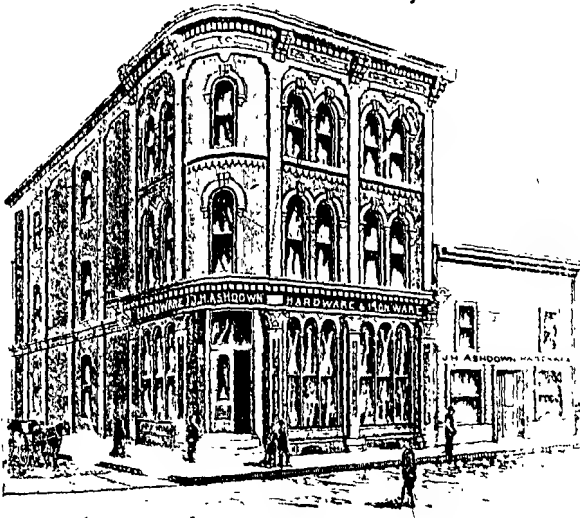
**R. ASHDOWN** might also supplement his claim to be called the father of the City of Winnipeg by virtue of the fact that he was the first representative of the people's party to sit on the Council. As soon as the city obtained its charter the first municipal election took place. Defeated in his effort to keep Winnipeg in

swaddling clothes, the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company used his powerful influence to foist a very defective election law on the city. In the election campaign he made up a Hudson's Bay ticket, and as the company wielded the big stick over officials and numerous half-breed employees, he boasted that his candidates would sweep the nominees of the citizens' party out of sight. Mr. Ashdown was one of those representing the peoples' interests, and he put up an active campaign. On election day, however, the big chief of the Hudson's Bay Company went from poll to poll with sleighs full of half-breeds. Mr. Ashdown related that the sleighs were so crowded that the men did not have room to sit down. And these electors voted at every poll without regard to residence or anything else. The political boss who was directing their unscrupulous activities met Mr. Ashdown at the corner of William Avenue and Main Street. With a broad smile the boss said to Mr. Ashdown, "I'm sorry I can't support you!" "All right," replied the indomitable hardware merchant, "I'll get there in spite of you!" And he did. But he was the only representative of the citizens' party that was elected. He continued to sit on the Council for several years, and had much to do with the framing of early by-laws and the organization of the public utilities of the city. He also contributed largely toward laying the foundation of Winnipeg's efficient school system.

### *Second Period of Expansion 1875*

LTHOUGH Mr. Ashdown displayed his qualities of good citizenship from the day he landed in Winnipeg and always willingly gave a great deal of his thought and time to municipal affairs, he never neglected his own business. From 1875 to 1885 might be called his first period of expansion. In 1875 the wooden building which he had erected four years earlier was found to be altogether inadequate to the constantly growing needs of his business. The time had now come for something more solid, more pretentious. Accordingly the old frame building was moved to the north side of the lot and a brick store, considered very

## DIAMOND JUBILEE



This illustration shows Mr. Ashdown's first building moved over and the three story brick building erected in 1875

handsome in those days, erected three stories high and with dimensions of twenty-five by seventy feet. This was thought at the time to provide ample accommodation for another decade, but so rapidly was the population increasing, and so active were building operations that only three years later Mr. Ashdown sold the original frame building and in its place filled in his lot to the north side with a brick structure that was larger than the brick store he had built three years before. This increased space only served his pressing needs for two years longer, and in 1880 we find him putting on a big two-storey addition, fifty by eighty feet, in the rear. Five years later his store covered every square foot of space in the whole lot and he probably wished that he had bought three or four large building lots instead of one.



Main Street Store, building which was burned to the ground October 11th, 1904.  
 Within thirty days after the fire, business was being conducted in the lower story  
 of the building illustrated on page forty two.

### *First Locomotive to Reach Winnipeg*

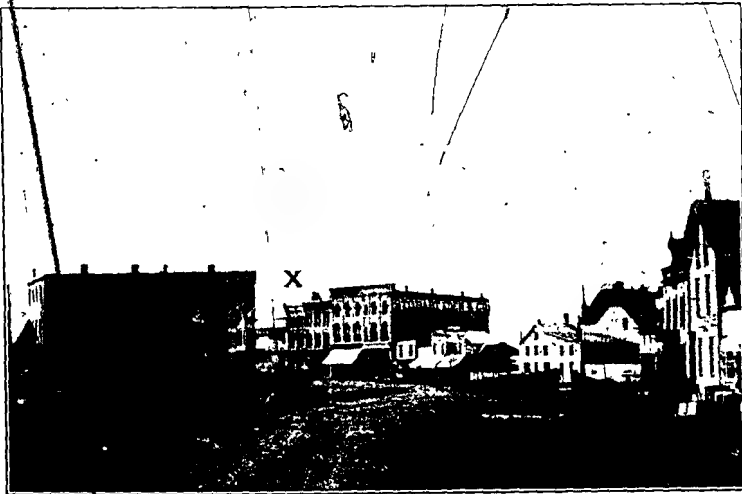
**D**URING this period, that is between 1875 and 1885, two events happened that were fraught with immense significance to Winnipeg and the Canadian West. In 1884 the Canadian Pacific Railway, that great venture of Canadian optimism, reached the banks of the Red River. In the following year trains were running into Winnipeg and East was joined to West at last. It may be of interest to some to learn that the first C.P.R. locomotive to reach Winnipeg (it is now a treasured souvenir, adorned with varnish and flowers, in the little park opposite the C.P.R. station) crossed the river on the ice.

What the C.P.R. did to further the development of the West is well known. The coming of the railway was naturally followed by an influx of population, but unfortunately this rush of settlers was accompanied by a wild real estate boom which boosted prices very high and had bad after effects.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

The second event which did much to accelerate the movement of population to the West was the North-West Rebellion in which Louis Riel was again the stormy petrel of the prairie country.

Perhaps the beneficial effects that flowed from the rebellion of 1885 are not so well understood. Riel's second attempt to establish himself as a dictator was in itself an evil and cost the lives of many settlers and volunteers, reaping a particularly heavy toll of life from Winnipeg regiments, but the aftermath of that brief struggle was highly advantageous to the new West. Previous to the outbreak of the rebellion, the settlers scattered over the prairie country had been engaged in a struggle for existence that had been made very difficult by reason of poor railway facilities and several crop failures. General Middleton's force required to have their supplies teamed long distances from the railway and this afforded employment at big pay to farmers who sorely needed the money. Again, the volunteer regiments



Winnipeg 1875.

X This sign denotes the Ashdown Main Street Store

from the East were largely composed of young men from Ontario farms who had heard much of the prairie country but were now able to see it for the first time and to form favorable judgement of the immense agricultural possibilities.

After the rebellion was over thousands of these men came West to become the backbone of the farming community in the Western provinces. And the letters written to Eastern Canadian and American newspapers by the correspondents with the forces did much to advertise this land of "magnificent distances, and illimitable possibilities."

### *The Winnipeg Board of Trade Incorporated*

**A**LTHOUGH the commercial interest and rapid growth of city and country alike may be said to have started with the arrival of the C.P.R. on the banks of the Red River in 1884, the attempt of Eastern interests to control the destinies of the West and use it to their own advantage imposed a duty upon public-spirited citizens to struggle against injustice. The Winnipeg Board of Trade, incorporated in 1879, was foremost in these battles to obtain for the West the benefit of its great natural advantages, and it was as a charter member of this wide-awake organization that Mr. Ashdown performed some of the best of his public service. From 1879 he was a leading member of the Board of Trade and sat on the Council of this influential body every year for forty years. It would be difficult for one to calculate the amount of time and effort that he managed to spare from the demands of his business in acting on committees and taking his full share of the discussion of public questions that have come under the purview of this body through half a century of the city's life.

### *Disallowance Question*

**T**HE first big struggle in which the Board of Trade engaged was in 1887 when Mr. Ashdown was president of the organization. This was what was known as the Disallowance Question. While the people of Western Canada hailed with the greatest enthusiasm the coming of the C.P.R. they had no intention of

allowing that railroad to maintain a monopoly in the West or to bleed the young country by excessive freight rates. Yet this was apparently what the new corporation backed by political influence set out to do. When in 1886 the Legislature of Manitoba unanimously granted a charter to a company to build a railroad to the Southern boundary to connect with the American system of railways and thus by establishing competition, force the C.P.R. to reduce its excessive freight tariffs, there was a great fo-do at Ottawa. Although the party in power had promised during a campaign that if elected it would not disallow railway charters granted by the Manitoba Legislature, it subsequently yielded to the powerful pressure of the C.P.R. and would have made a continuation of its monopoly possible in Manitoba and the West had it not been for the strenuous campaign waged on behalf of provincial rights by men like Greenway and Martin in the Legislature and by the Winnipeg Board of Trade.

A relic of that intense campaign for provincial rights has come down to us in the shape of a brown-backed pamphlet issued by the Winnipeg Board of Trade under the imprimatur of President Ashdown in July, 1887. It is entitled, "Plain Facts Regarding Disallowance of Manitoba Railway Charters." The pamphlet contains an analysis of the high freight rates charged by the C.P.R. in the West as compared with those in operation on American railroads. The whole argument in its practical and constitutional aspects is very vigorous. The following passage towards the close shows how Mr. Ashdown and the men behind him could fight on a vital issue:

"We ask for the abolition of no privilege or advantage guaranteed by the Dominion or any portion thereof to any individual corporation or community. We ask for no aid from the tax-payer of the Dominion in our efforts to free ourselves from the withering monopoly with which we are unjustly burdened. But we ask for the privileges guaranteed to every province in Confederation by the British North American Act; for the guarantees made to Manitoba by the Dominion Act, creating the very corporation which now holds the grasp of monopoly upon our province and its people; for the cessation

of the abuse of the Vice-Regal veto power, in direct contradiction of the statements and pledges of the leader and other members of the present Government, made by them when the charter of the Canadian Pacific Railway was granted; and, lastly, we ask for a redemption of the pledges made by members of the same Government, but faithlessly broken in order that one hundred thousand struggling pioneers of this prairie province may be crushed and trampled upon to secure a purely imaginary financial gain to one soulless corporation."

The people of Manitoba, after years of struggle in the local Legislature and at Ottawa, won out on this important issue. It was owing, however, to the pressing financial needs of the C.P.R. rather than the compulsion of the Dominion Government which resulted in the abolition of disallowance in Manitoba and the North-West. It was in 1887 that the company unwillingly surrendered its strangle-hold on the West in order to secure the Federal Government's guarantee of interest on \$15,000,000 of its five per cent. bonds for fifty years.

## *High Freight Rates*

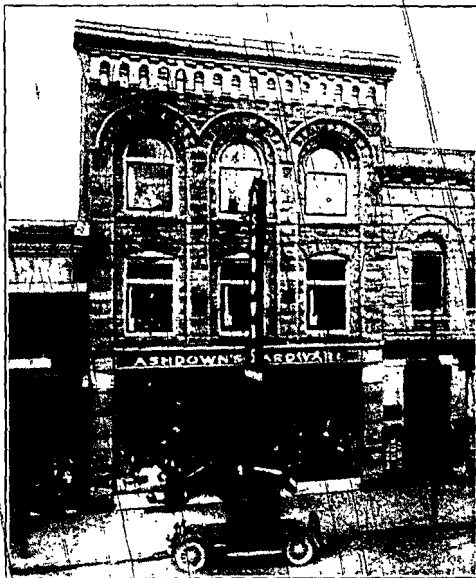
**B**UT the struggle of the merchants of Winnipeg against high freight rates was to be continued for very many years. In fact it is a live enough issue today. Among the business men of this city vitally interested in the question was Mr. Ashdown. One of his many labors on this intricate subject is to be found in the sixteenth annual report of the Board of Trade which gives his lengthy evidence before a Government Freight Rates Commission which sat in Winnipeg in December, 1894. In his able presentation of the case for the Board of Trade, Mr. Ashdown charged the C.P.R. with having put in force and sustained in the whole country from Fort William to the Rocky Mountains freight rates altogether too high and out of proportion to those charged elsewhere in Canada. He contended further that by adopting this policy the company had grievously injured the people

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

and seriously retarded the progress of the entire West. One of the telling points of Mr. Ashdown's indictment of the company was his quotation of an unlucky utterance of the then president, Sir William Van Horne, made only three years before, "that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company would carry fuel at cost, would carry settlers' building material at about cost, and would carry settlers' grain at a mere shade over cost."

### *Calgary Branch 1889*

**B**UT high rates or low there was an insistent and steadily increasing demand for hardware goods. As early as 1889 the incoming tide of settlers was spreading all over the last great West. Houses were going up, hardware was required everywhere, and Mr. Ashdown, saw that Calgary would one day be a distributing point perhaps second only in importance to Winnipeg. In 1889, therefore, he purchased a hardware business there and, two years later, built a store, 32 x 50,



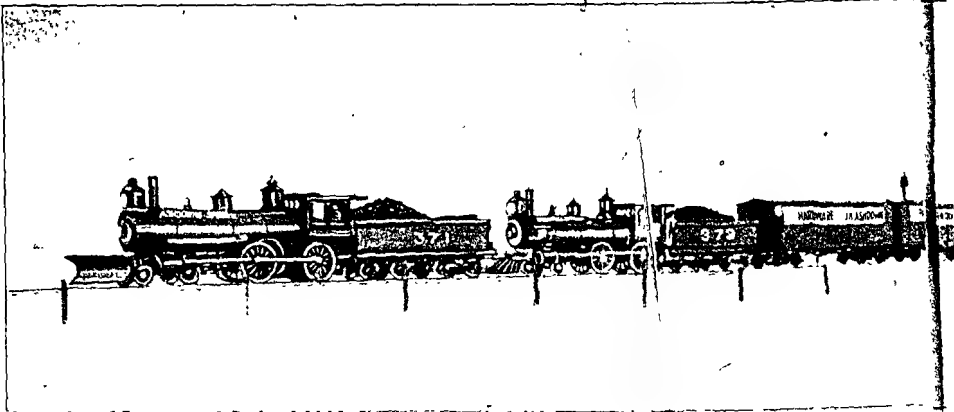
Eighth Avenue, Calgary.



R. W. PATTERSON  
Manager Calgary Retail Store

three stories high. Although he had always done a certain amount of jobbing trade he decided about this time that the growth of retail stores in the prairie towns that were springing up like mushrooms overnight, would necessitate a further extension of his wholesale trade. The fact that the severe climate of the West required much of the imported merchandise to be shipped up the lakes in summer time and stored in Winnipeg warehouses in preparation for the business of the next winter and spring was

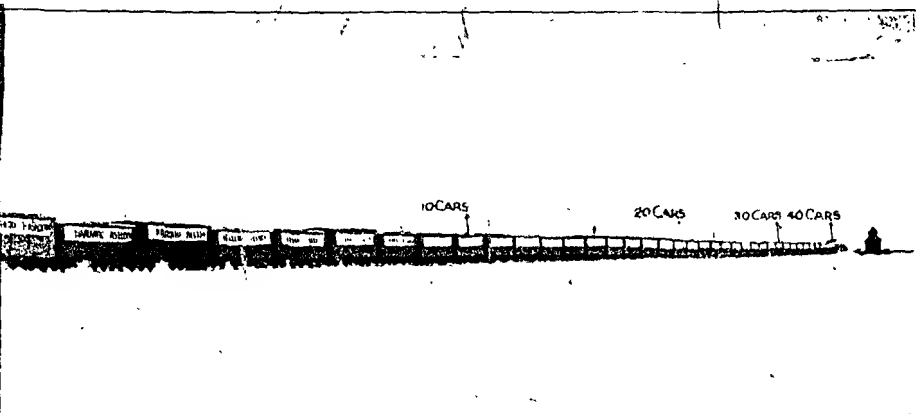
bound to make this city a great wholesale centre. Quick to perceive this, Mr. Ashdown, in 1896, commenced construction of his present wholesale warehouse, a brick and stone building then four stories high with dimensions eighty by one hundred and thirty-five feet. This was the first wholesale hardware house erected West of the Great Lakes.



The 'Ashdown Special' Forty Cars of Hardware

*Forty Cars of Hardware in one Shipment 1900*

**I**T was in the Spring of 1900 that Mr. Ashdown conceived the idea of sending out a whole train-load of hardware to points in the West. This was an epoch-making event, not only in the history of his own firm, but in the wholesale business of Winnipeg. Each car in the long train, which carried eight hundred tons of building material and general hardware, was decorated with the phrase "Hardware from J. H. Ashdown," and caused nothing less than a sensation in commercial circles of the West. The newspapers of Winnipeg wrote up the event as a striking evidence of the rapid development of the country, and it excited much talk on the part of the general public. News of this enterprise spread to the south, and the story of the "Ashdown Special" awakened several of the wholesale hardware houses of the South and East to the commercial possibilities of Western Canada, with the consequence that within a short time some of them established branches in Winnipeg, while others began to send travellers into the prairie provinces to compete with Mr. Ashdown's representatives. Competition, however, is the life of trade; although rivals invaded his field, he never regretted the despatch of



Dispatched West in one train on Tuesday, March 6th, 1900

# DIAMOND JUBILEE



Board of Directors at time of Incorporation 1902

No. 5—J. H. ASHDOWN, President

No. 1—JOHN EMSLIE

No. 3—A. BUEHLER

No. 2—ISAAC PITBLADO, Esq

No. 4—J. A. LINDSAY

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

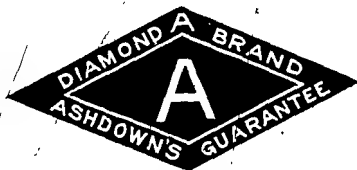
his special train. It was one of the biggest advertisements that the commercial West ever received.

So rapidly was business developing that in 1902 it was found necessary to build another large addition to the wholesale warehouse on Bannatyne Street. In the same year Mr. Ashdown decided to incorporate his business as "The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company, Limited." It was incorporated under Dominion charter with a nominal capital of one million dollars, which was subsequently increased to two millions and later to eight millions.

### *Registering the "Diamond A" Trade Mark*



N 1904 the firm marked another milestone in its path of progress by registering its "Diamond A" trademark, now so well known wherever hardware is displayed for sale in Western Canada. Copyrighted February 24, 1904, this "Diamond A" brand carried with it all the resources of the Ashdown Company in the way of a guarantee. Wherever it is seen in the West today, it assures the actual or prospective buyer that the article it labels is of such good quality, that satisfaction is guaranteed by one of the most reputable houses in Canada.



The "Diamond A" Trade Mark which stands for the highest quality and is backed by  
The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company, Limited

Both the incorporation of the company and the registration of the "Diamond A" trademark impressed hardware dealers with the growth and enterprise of the firm. The

Ashdown house was now carrying huge stocks, but it was doing nothing more than maintaining the early policy, handling such a variety of hardware that customers would never be disappointed. From the very beginning Mr. Ashdown prided himself in carrying such a full line of hardware that people could always be sure to find what they wanted in his stocks. Whether other dealers stocked a certain line of hardware or not, it was always possible to procure it at the Ashdown store. As in earlier years, the company still enjoys this reputation; it remains in the lead today as during the whole sixty years of its history.

## *Rapid Reconstruction*



T was in 1904 that Mr. Ashdown demonstrated his ability to secure quick results. Whether in the management of his own business or in the conduct of public affairs, he proved himself an adept in executing plans with rapidity. His record in this respect



Main Street Store, Winnipeg

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

was established after the fire, which, on October 11th of that year, destroyed his retail store on Main Street. Almost before the ashes were cold, he was beginning the work of rebuilding. The ruins were cleared away by October 27th, and a new building, two storeys high, fifty-five by seventy, was erected and open for business within thirty days from the laying of the first stone. As soon as it was possible to resume building operations the next spring, the whole lot was filled in and the building completed, the handsomest and best-equipped hardware store in Canada.



Headquarters, Winnipeg

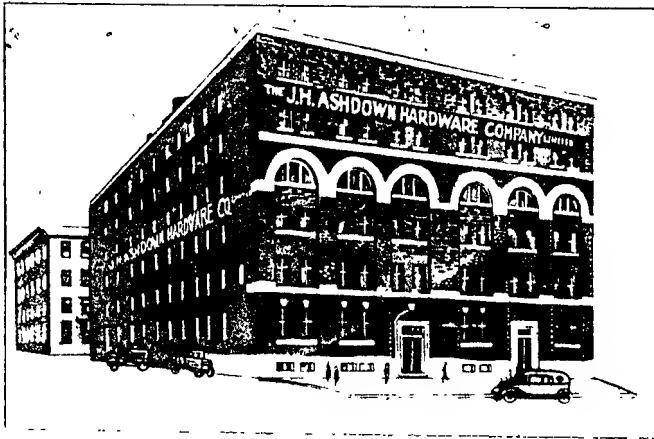
The history of The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company is one long chronicle of building operations. The reader of this narrative must have been struck with this fact already. In 1906 he was obliged to add two more stories in height to his already large warehouse in Winnipeg. In 1912 an additional building 82 by 135 feet, six stories high was added. Owing to the rapid extension of trade in Alberta, a wholesale warehouse was erected in Calgary. It was four stories in height and 50 by 120 feet, but, optimistic as he was Mr. Ashdown

## DIAMOND JUBILEE



H. G. MORRISON  
Manager Calgary Wholesale

underestimated how quickly Alberta was progressing, so that the very next year the company had to raise its new warehouse to six stories and later double its size. The business done by this Branch has been more than satisfactory from the start and under the able management of Mr. H. G. Morrison, forms an increasingly important unit of the Company.



Eleventh Avenue, Calgary

### *Saskatoon Branch 1912*

**T**HE next year the branch business, which had been established in Nelson, British Columbia, in 1896, to Saskatoon, which the Company judged would soon become an important distributing centre for Saskatchewan. A large warehouse was erected there in charge of Mr. J. Noel Nivin. Saskatoon has also witnessed one

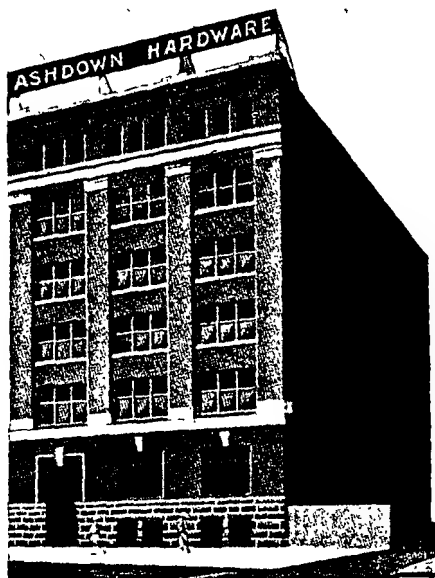
## DIAMOND JUBILEE

of Mr. Ashdown's feats in quick recovery after a fire. In March, 1918, this big warehouse was destroyed by fire, and by the following January, the new building was open for business. It is modern in every respect, equipped with sprinkler system, with freight elevators and track facilities, a warehouse six stories high, with a frontage of 100 feet and depth of 120 feet, one of the best buildings of its kind in Western Canada.



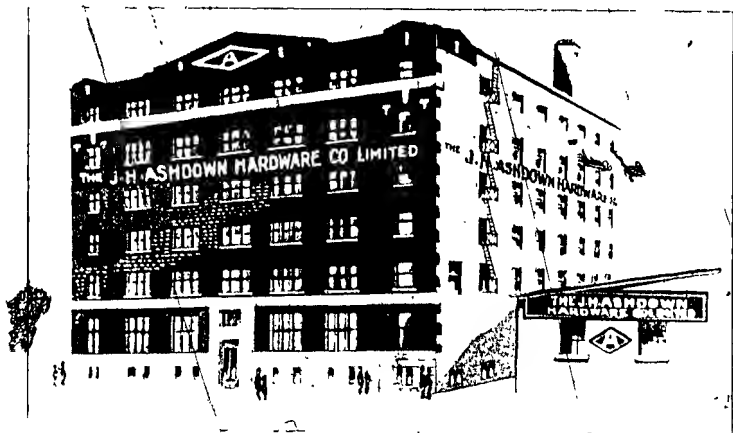
J. NOEL NIVIN  
Manager Saskatoon Branch

Although during the period of the war the Ashdown Hardware Company held its own and did a big volume of business every year, there was little or no immigration into



Saskatoon Building which was burned to the ground, March, 1918. By January, 1919, the building illustrated on the next page was opened for business.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE



Current Saskatoon Building

Western Canada, and the high cost of building materials and the scarcity of labor incident to the war arrested the development which under conditions of peace would have taken place. Nothing can deter the progress of the Western land, however, and 1923 saw things going forward again with greater momentum than ever. It was in this year that Mr. Ashdown bought the building built by Ross Brothers at



Edmonton Branch

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

Edmonton some years before for a wholesale hardware warehouse and rented it to the Company to establish a branch at this point. The Company later bought the building from Mr. Ashdown.

This branch, in charge of Mr. D. B. Thompson, made good progress from the start and in 1927 when the large wholesale hardware stock of Revillons Wholesale came on the market it was purchased by the Company. This made additional space imperative and another building 70 by 135 was erected in 1928, making the total warehouse space 150 by 135, four stories and basement. In 1929 Mr. Thompson was



D. B. THOMPSON  
Merchandising Manager

promoted to the position of Merchandise Manager at Winnipeg, and Mr. J. O. Budd succeeded him at Edmonton.



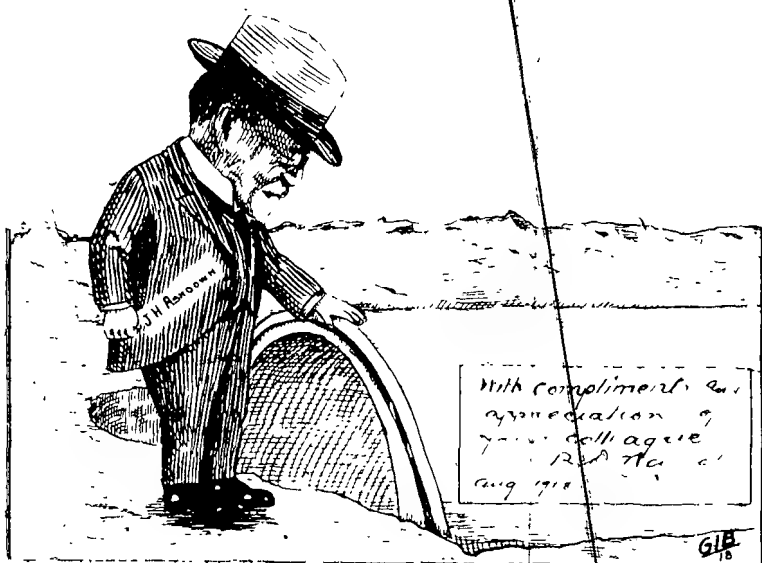
J. O. BUDD  
Manager, Edmonton Branch

On April 5, 1924, the Ashdown Company suffered the severest blow to its career, when Mr. J. H. Ashdown, the founder and head of the business passed away just a few days after celebrating his eightieth birthday.

James Henry Ashdown was honored by common consent as the first citizen of Winnipeg. He was first in many ways; Chronologically, for he was there longer than the city. First in business, for there had not been a time since Winnipeg

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

was a frontier post when that position had not been accorded him. His public services were distinguished, he having been mayor of the city for two terms and a member of many important public bodies. Besides his directorships in various important companies, including the Bank of Montreal, he was a member of the Royal Commission of Transportation in 1906, and some years later member of the Board of Commissioners of Greater Winnipeg Water District. He was one of the most outstanding philanthropists that Canada has ever known. Besides large contributions during his lifetime to various educational, religious, and philanthropic institutions, at the time of his death he left nearly one half of his total estate to such institutions as the Winnipeg General Hospital, the Y.M.C.A., the Children's Hospital, the Children's Home, the Salvation Army and many others. Fifty-four years of business life in the Canadian West were enjoyed by Mr. Ashdown during which time he witnessed great changes, through all of which he never failed to maintain his position and the position of the city he had built up.



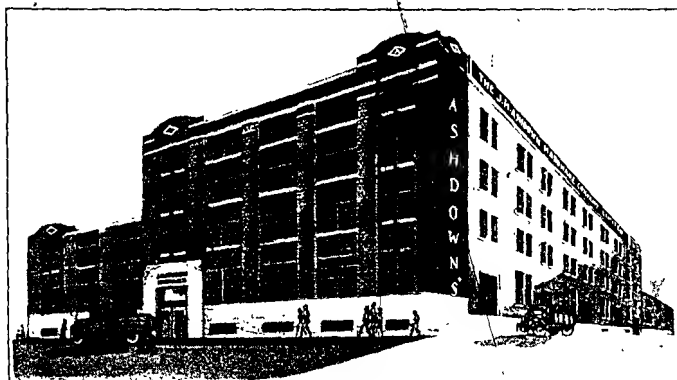
THE MASTER BUILDER

The illustration above is a copy of a special work of art arranged by Mr. R. D. Waugh, and presented by him to the Greater Winnipeg Water District. It is a commemorative work in connection with the Greater Winnipeg Water District.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

He was succeeded in the presidency of The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company Limited by his son, Harry C. Ashdown, who was formerly Vice-President of the Company and who had been associated with the firm for some years previously. Mr. H. C. Ashdown is a member of the Board of Directors Canadian General Securities Limited, member of Manitoba Regional Board, London & Western Trust Company, member of Board of Trustees, Winnipeg General Hospital member of Board of Trustees Wesley College, and Director Knowles School for Boys.

Business conditions at the time of the late Mr. Ashdown's death were not good, particularly in the West, and it was a case of marking time virtually until 1928, when it was considered advisable to establish a branch at Regina and the large wholesale business of Lynch & Parker was purchased on



Regina Branch

October 1, 1928. Having in mind the growing needs of that district, a building was immediately erected 70 x 150 feet, four stories and basement, adjoining the old premises of

## DIAMOND JUBILEE



H. A. BESTALL  
Manager, Saskatoon Hardware Company

Lynch & Parker. This building was commenced on October 3rd and in spite of winter conditions, was finished in record time and ready to take in goods on January 1, 1929. Although only a year old, this new branch has, under the management of Mr. H. A. Bestall, more than fulfilled the expectations of the Company at the time of its acquisition.

### *Saskatoon Hardware Company*

**I**N February, 1929 The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company Limited, made the latest move in its steady program of expansion by purchasing the capital stock of the Saskatoon Hardware Company, a large retail business at Saskatoon.

Charles H. Smith was promoted from Assistant Manager of the Winnipeg retail store to Manager of the Saskatoon Hardware Company. These latest additions gave the Company five wholesale warehouses, and the three finest retail hardware stores in the West.

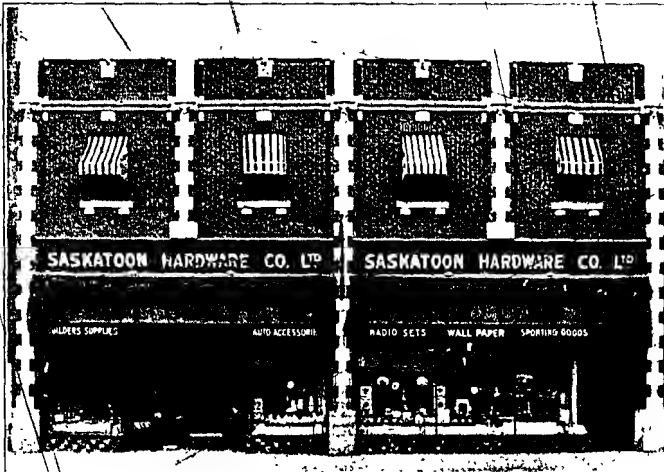
The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company Limited celebrated in 1929 the Diamond Jubilee of the founding of the business sixty years before. Its record has been one of steady,



C. H. SMITH  
Manager  
Saskatoon Hardware Company

## DIAMOND JUBILEE

consistent growth and expansion. There are few, if any, other Canadian firms which can point to a customer who has bought from them consistently for considerably over one-half a century. This Company has several customers whose names have appeared on the books of the business for forty



Saskatoon Hardware Company

to fifty years. Ashdown's and good hardware are synonymous terms in Western Canada. The firm has maintained its position on the crest of the wave of advance that has marked the country's progress for more than one half a century.

Mr. A. F. Dykes, Vice-President of the Company, has been for many years perhaps the best known hardware man in Western Canada. With one exception he is the oldest employee in point of service of The J. H. Ashdown Hardware Company, his connection with the business dating from the year 1886.

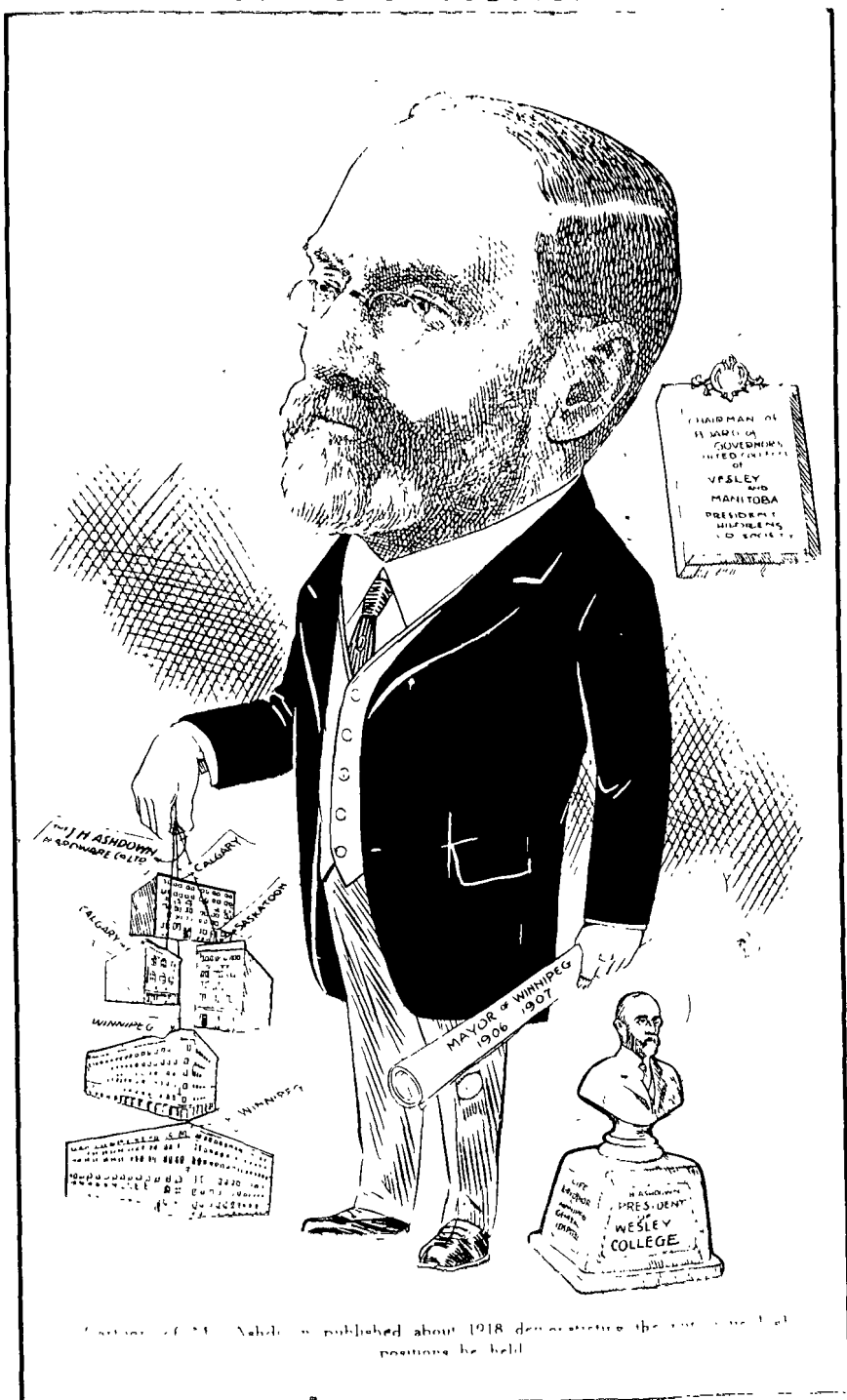
## DIAMOND JUBILEE

Mr. R. A. Graham, the Company's General Manager, has been with the firm since 1905. He is a director of the Prairie Cities Oil Company, and the Sprinklered Risk Underwriters, Chicago.

The remaining directors, Mr. N. S. Hutchison, Mr. C. H. S. Ramford, Mr. W. E. Davison, and Mr. W. J. Ilsey, are all actively connected with the various activities of the Company and have all been with the company for a considerable number of

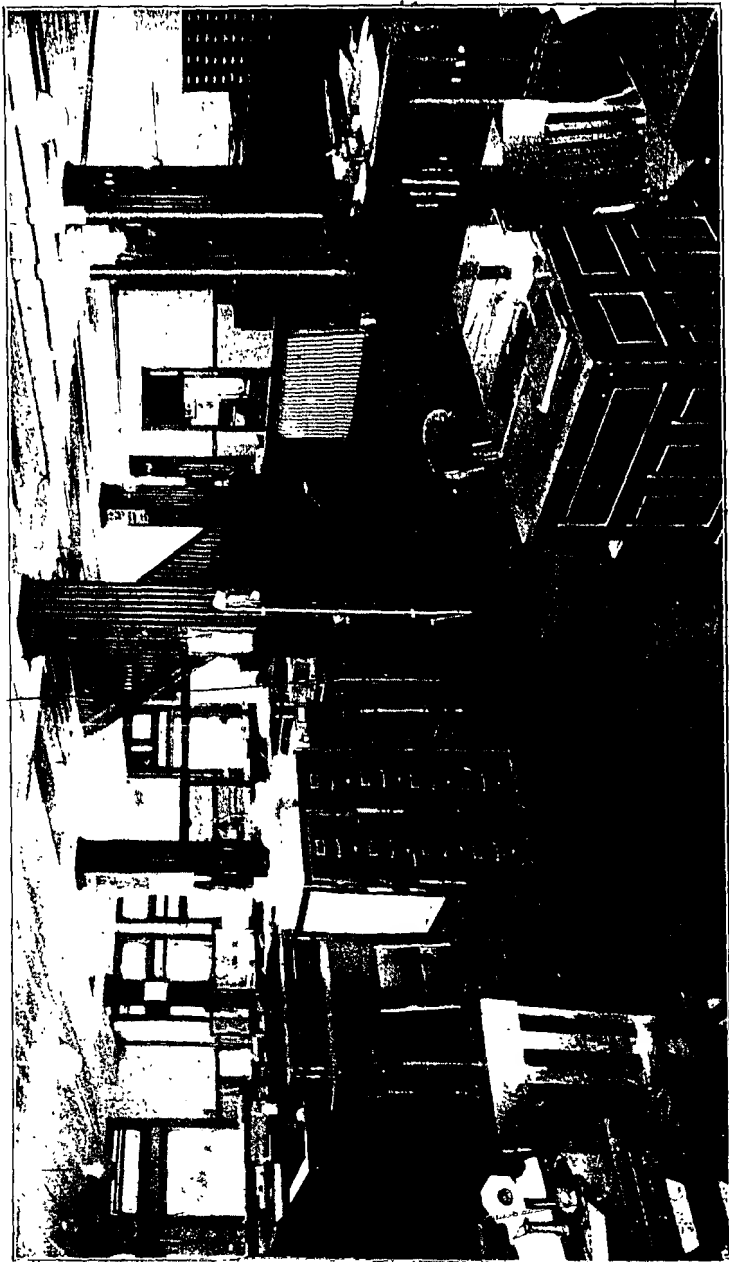


# DIAMOND JUBILEE



Cartoon of H. Ashdown published about 1918 demonstrating the various positions he held.

DIAMOND JUBILEE



Part View of the Head Office, Winnipeg, Manitoba

# DIAMOND JUBILEE



Part View of Head Office, Winnipeg Manitoba

## DIAMOND JUBILEE



Part of Printing Department, showing Linotypes, Gordon Press, Automatic Press and large Presses

# DIAMOND JUBILEE



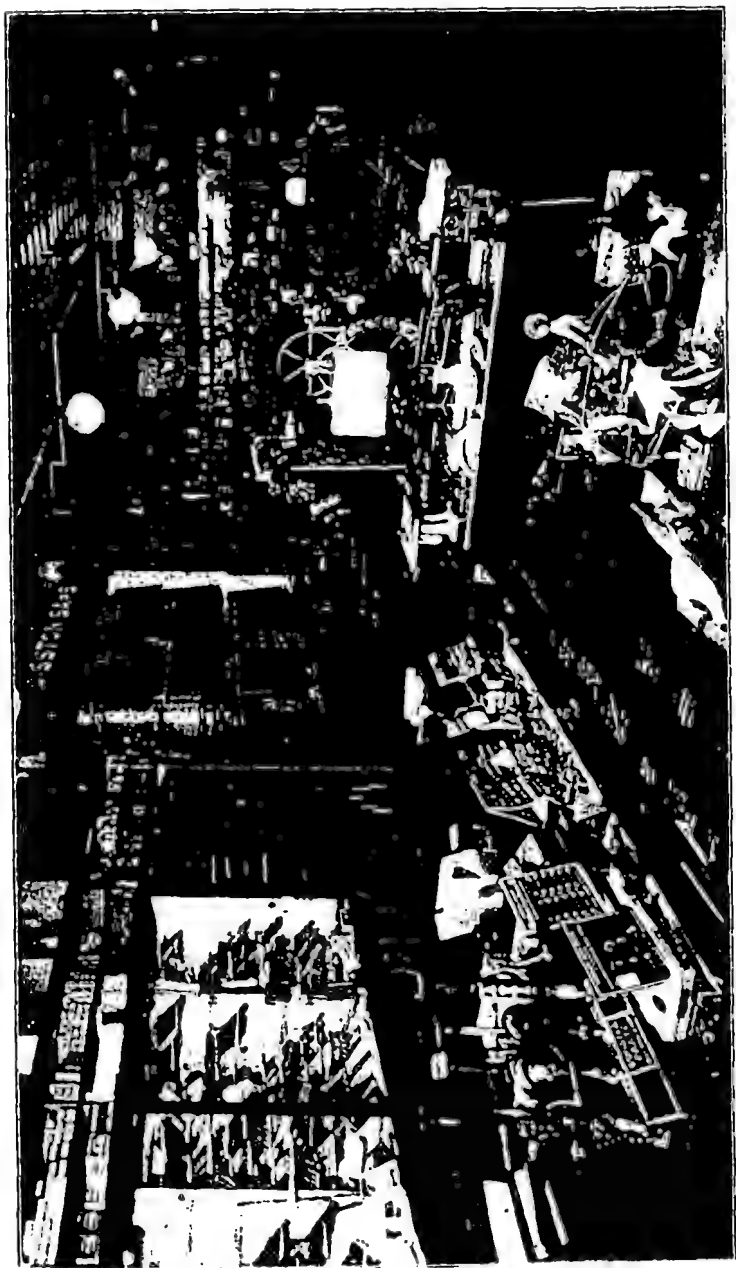
View of Part of Printing Department, Showing Composing Room and Galleys

# DIAMOND JUBILEE



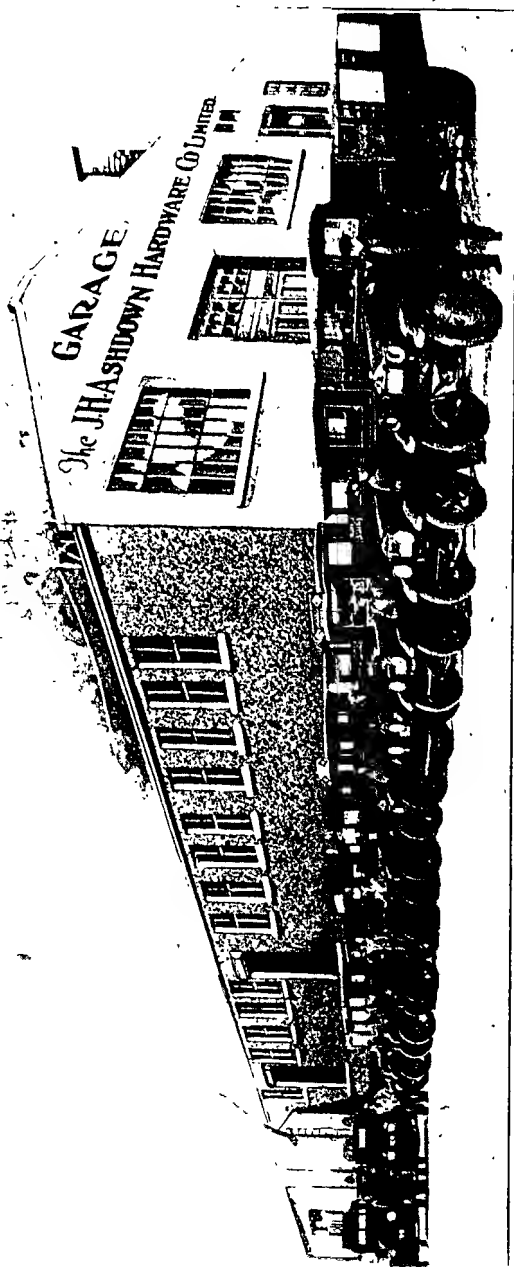
View of the Main Street Store, Winnipeg—Showing a part of the Sporting Goods Section

# DIAMOND JUBILEE



Interior view of the Main Street Store, Winnipeg—showing a part of the Tool Section

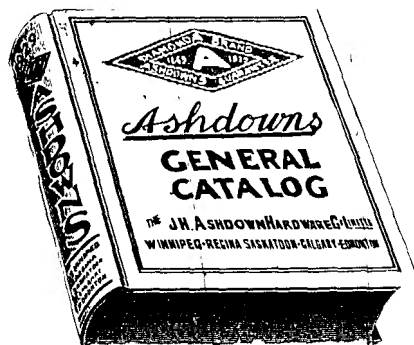
# DIAMOND JUBILEE



TRUCKS OF ALL SIZES AND GARAGES OF ALL

DIAMOND JUBILEE

## THE COMPLETE CATALOG



Away back in 1869 hardware dealers were thankful for the most meagre conveniences. Hardware catalogs, price services and many other useful things which we enjoy to-day were unknown.

The first hardware catalog placed in the hands of the trade of Western Canada was issued by the late J. H. Ashdown. Many of these first catalogs are still extant and are highly prized by their owners, not only as souvenirs of the early days in the trade but as links with the past.

Since the first catalog was issued in 1868 it has been succeeded by a long line of descendants, each a little better, a little more comprehensive than the previous one.

The 1929 Catalog is based on sixty years' experience. In it is fully expressed the purpose of a catalog: which is to supply information through the most sensitive faculty of man—the eye. Illustrations coupled with clear, concise and comprehensive descriptions bring out the sales story in a hit by point taking the guess work out of buying.

Catalog compilation goes on incessantly. One is no sooner completed than a revision commences in order that the firm's customers may promptly receive information of the changes and refinements constantly taking place in hardware merchandise.



## ROLL OF HONOUR

Abell, W. J.	Goble, John
Ashdown, Chas	Hawkins, Chas
Bell, Norman H	Hawley, G. C
Blackball, Al	Herbert, Geo. H
Blom, C. H.	Herd, Geo
Boston, I. H	Hobday, Cecil H
Boulton, George	Hodgson, George
Bowen, Robert	Hood, Henry
Caldwell, Tom	Horpe, M. M.
Campbell, A. M.	Hourihan, J
Campbell, Ne	Hunter, Jer
Caplett, J	Johnson, O. J
Chalmers, C	Kelly, T.
Clark, John	Lake, Charles I
Clark, Stanley	Lawrence, P.
Cohen, Joe	Lewis, Harry C
Cooper, O. S	Lindsay, F. G
Craig, Roy	Little, W.
Crooks, A. H	Livingstone, Geo
Cunningham, G	Lundy, J. G
Curtiss, Harold	Macnamara, A.
Damer, J. W	Matheson, R.
Darcy, Norman	McBride, Stue
Debuc, A.	McDonald, W
de Goesbriand	McGuire, Geo
Delaney, C. J	McHenry, J
Driver, A	McInnes, C. F
Durnan, J.	McIntosh, G
Faulkner, R. P	McKee, J
Ferry, R. W	McKenzie, K.
Fitzgibbon, J	McLarty, D.
Flett, D	McVey, J. C
Foley, Ed	Miller, I. S
Foster, H	Morton, Capt
Irish, W	Muirhead, W
Irish, W	Murray, Peter

## ROLL OF HONOUR

Nancarrow, Lt. J. I.	Smith, Alf
Nichol, And.	Smith, Chas.
O'Brien, Lt. J.	Smith, T. J.
O'Brien, John	Smith, Wm.
Olson, B.	Snell, W. J.
Page, Chas. E.	Spaul, R.
Parrott, Arthur	Steele, Ivall
Parry, Hubert	Stephens, W. E.
Pattinson, W. J.	Stevens, Alfred
Peacock, Arthur	Sutherland, Donald
Pentland, C. O. J.	Sutherland, Geo.
Perdue, C.	Tetlow, Geo.
Phillips, Harry	Thomas, D. A.
Prescott, D.	Thompson, W. J.
Purdy, Geo.	Vine, F. S.
Rad, Thomas	Walsh, Frank
Radford, N.	Warner, C. M.
Robertson, F. W.	Webb, W. H.
Robinson, W.	White, A.
Roffey, T.	White, Tom
Ross, Andrew	White, W.
Sanderson, T. B.	Whittall, Harry C.
Savage, J.	Williams, J. S.
Scruton, M.C. Maj. J. D.	Winsor, Arch.
Sheldon, Wm.	Wood, Wm.
Shoeman, Wm.	Woodman, F. J.
Shute, W. S.	Woods, Harry
Slackford, C. H.	Yates, Jack

Killed



